

SENATE BILL 3361
By Herron

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 4-1-310,
relative to the Tennessee official state gem.

WHEREAS, Birdsong Creek, located on the scenic Tennessee River in the western portion of Tennessee, is the point of the sole farming operation producing freshwater cultured pearls in the United States and North America. The sole producer of the official gem for the state of Tennessee is hereby recognized; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee River Freshwater Pearl Farm, its techniques, operations, and product, shall hereby be noted as an educational facility to introduce the public to the industry of culturing freshwater pearls; this facility introduces visitors to implantation procedures, farming, harvesting, the final freshwater pearl product and to the historical evolution of pearl culturing in Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, in 2003, the department of tourist development published the 2002 annual visitation report of attractions in Tennessee and recognized Birdsong Resort and Marina as home of the Tennessee River Freshwater Pearl Farm, including the facility's tour, mini-theatre, museum and pearl jewelry showroom, which hosted over 300,000 tourists in that year, earning the facility a position in the top 20 attractions in the entire state of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, freshwater pearl culturing and the Tennessee River Freshwater Pearl Farm and Museum have received national, state and local recognition, including being featured in documentaries and articles produced by such media as National Geographic, ABC's 20-20, Southern Living, Nova, CBS Sunday Morning, Tennessee Crossroads, The Tennessean, The Nashville Banner, The Jackson Sun and hundreds of others; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 4-1-310, is amended by redesignating the existing language as subsection (a) and by adding the following new subsection (b):

(b) The historic Tennessee River Freshwater Pearl Farm and Museum located in Camden, Benton County, Tennessee is hereby designated the official site of freshwater pearl culturing in the state of Tennessee.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.